

REMARKS

Claims 1-12 are pending. Claim 1 has been amended to clarify that "regions" represents output bits. Support for this amendment can be found, for example, on page 16, lines 11-25 of the present application. Claims 7 and 8 have been cosmetically amended for better form. No new matter has been added.

Claim Rejections 35 USC 102

Claims 1-12 have been rejected as anticipated under section 102(e) by Minami et al. Applicants submit that the invention as claimed is not taught or suggested by the Minami patent for the following reasons.

Amended claim 1 recites:

1. A semiconductor device comprising:
a plurality of regions representing output bits; and
a dummy pattern having the same shape as the output bits formed to be adjacent to the end portion of a output bit group.

The Minami patent does not disclose, teach or suggest at least the above bolded features. FIG. 15 and FIG. 16A-16E of the Minami patent show a silicon substrate 31 having a wiring 36a and dummy pattern 37a formed upon the substrate. Applicants submit that wiring 36a is not equivalent to an "output bit" or an "output bit group" as recited in claim 1 because these structures perform different functions. Even assuming that wiring is construed as an output bit, FIG. 16B clearly shows that dummy pattern 37a has a **different** shape than wiring 36a and does not show "a dummy pattern having the **same** shape as the output bits" as recited in claim 1. Moreover, FIG. 16B shows wiring 36a formed **upon** dummy pattern 37a which is not equivalent to "a dummy pattern ... formed to be **adjacent** to the end portion of a output bit group" as recited in claim 1. Thus, at least for this reason, claim 1 is not anticipated by the Minami patent.

Claim 2 recites similar subject matter as the above bolded features of claim 1. Claim 2 should be allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 1. Because claims 3-6 depend from claim 2, claims 3-6 should be allowable for at least the same reasons.

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Likewise, claims 7, 8 and 10 recite similar subject matter as the above bolded features of claim 1. Claims 7, 8 and 10 should be allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 1. Because claims 9, 12 and 11 depend from these claims, claims 9, 12 and 11 should be allowable for at least the same reasons.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejections and allowance of the application.